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Latin America Report

(FOUO 22/81)



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LATIN AMERICA REPORT

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COUNTRY SECTION

BRAZIL

RIGHTISTS DOUBT COUNTRY READY FOR 'OPENING'

PY310058 Rio de Janeiro LATIN AMERICA DAILY POST in English 30 Aug 81 p 5

[Special to the DAILY POST by Herbert Zschech]

[Excerpt] Rio de Janeiro--A few days of street rioting in the state capital of Bahia where hundreds of buses were stoned, wrecked or set afire and super-markets and also some government offices were invaded by furious mobs in protest against a 61 percent increase of the bus fares and by extension against the searing living costs in general, were enough to provoke skepticism about the prospects of the so-called political opening so insistently promised by President Figueiredo. The possibility that economic difficulties and the consequent social tensions could jeopardize the march toward full democracy had been raised with increasing frequency in recent months. Rightwing radicals hinted cautiously but lately more outspokenly, to what they see as incompatibility of democratization with an economic crisis as currently affects Brazil.

This skepticism until recently was emphatically rejected and refuted by official voices. Now, the hard reality of ominous symptoms of looming social conflicts seems to have been suddenly and acutely sensed in governmental and military circles. The cardinal archbishop of Bahia and primate of Brazil, Dom Avelar Brandao Vilela, stated bluntly that occurrences like those in the city of Salvador could cause problems for the political opening. The new chief of staff of the armed forces, Gen. Frederico Werner, in his inaugural address days ago, listened to by President Figueiredo and nearly all the ministers, warned that the social and political situation calls for "caution." In various military statements on soldiers' day last week, mention was made of leftist radicals trying to impair the democratic opening.

Until recently, leftwing radicalism as a danger to democracy had been, if not denied, then at least belittled in most political sectors which rather emphasized the alleged activities of rightwing radicals within the security services and other influential sectors as a latent danger to the "opening." Now, different views begin to be admitted. Evidently, the alleged spontaneity of street riots is always questionable, and becomes entirely unlikely when such riots extend over several days and erupt over a large area. In such cases, it would be naive to doubt that the mobs are manipulated.

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Some opposition members still contend that disorders are provoked by rightwing adversaries of the political opening in order to "prove" that the time is not suitable, and the nation not mature, for democracy and that the crisis calls for a strongarm regime. That this is a view really supported in sectors which, according to unproven but often repeated versions, have influential representatives incrustated even within the innermost circle of the regime, seems rather evident. Still, the Bahia riots and a series of conflicts in rural backward regions involving landless peasants reek too much of leftist, i.e., communist, agitation for being daily attributable to rightwing radicals.

In any case, the principal question remains--is the political opening compatible with a phase of acute economic and social crisis? Figueiredo has pledged--not once but a number of times--that he will go ahead with democratization and, more specifically, that the November 15, 1982 elections will take place. But what he has avoided commenting is what could happen if, as is more than likely, the elections should bring an all-out defeat of government candidates and the government's PDS. Within the PDS ranks, this possibility seems to be widely taken for granted, causing a psychological state of discouragement which the Planalto Palace, through its policy makers Leitao de Abreu and Abi Ackel, tries to improve. This was even characterized days ago as a task of high priority for the regime--inspiring some optimism and self-reliance to its PDS.

Until very recently, the government made desperate efforts for improving the electoral chances of the PDS through electoral reforms. It was gradually seen, however, that all the reforms suggested would, while improving the chances of the PDS candidates in some states or cities, would on the other hand benefit the opposition candidates in other regions. Great hopes were placed on presidential office chief Leitao de Abreu for somehow finding a way out of the dilemma.

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COUNTRY SECTION

BRAZIL

FRENCH-MEXICAN EL SALVADOR STATEMENT PRAISED

PY051634 Rio de Janeiro LATIN AMERICA DAILY POST in English 4 Sep 81 p 4

[Editorial: "El Salvador Plan"]

[Text] France and Mexico have joined together to recognize the right of El Salvador leftist groups to participate in the political process of the Central American nation. The move by these two serious countries is a step short of granting "recognition" to the El Salvador guerrillas but does help change the international perception of the power struggle in that country.

The United States not only doesn't recognize the guerrillas as a legitimate political voice in El Salvador but is actively trying to help the current government stamp them out with increased military aid, including military advisers in non-combat roles. The United States favors free elections as the best solution to El Salvador's internal political problems.

The France-Mexican move is a logical extension of the traditional foreign policy philosophies of France and Mexico. Their proposals don't seem particularly radical and have a basis of fact. The leftist guerrillas and the political allies aligned with them quite obviously represent a force of importance within the context of El Salvadoran politics today. To ignore them is folly, to fight them is increasingly costly and perhaps over the long run the worst solution as the excesses and violence generated by the battle against the guerrillas has escalated to gruesome proportions. Some 22,000 people already have died in what is essentially a civil war in El Salvador.

The need to approach the El Salvador situation on the basis of dialogue rather than fighting is apparent to most observers. The France-Mexican recognition of the political left as potential spokesmen in a national dialogue is a first step in setting up a framework so that the proper Salvadoran personalities can discuss the problem. And the problem, essentially, is precisely how to hold free and open elections in which the results will be neither overturned nor manipulated, by an entrenched power structure.

That is not a very revolutionary idea for the United States to embrace. It is a question of trying to work within the political realities of the Salvadoran situation. Mexico and France have come up with a first, tentative solution. In the final analysis it will be the Salvadorans who have to solve this situation for themselves but a little bit of help from their friends should be welcome. We can urge the United States to take a serious look at this approach and see if it cannot embark upon a similar path that will eventually lead to a legitimate electoral solution for the tormented little country.

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COUNTRY SECTION

CUBA

MALMIERCA SPEAKS AT COMMEMORATION OF NONALIGNED 20TH ANNIVERSARY

PA041919 Havana PRELA in English 1930 GMT 4 Sep 81

[Text] United Nations, 5 Sep (PL)--[Date as received]--Cuban Foreign Relations Minister Isidoro Malmierca Peoli presided over a solemn plenary session held here to commemorate the 20th anniversary of the constitution of the nonaligned movement.

While addressing yesterday a meeting on behalf of the President of the Nonaligned Movement, Fidel Castro, Malmierca said that the path travelled by this group of countries along these 20 years has been full with difficulties at the same time that it faced numerous and steadfast attempts to sow division in its rank. He underlined that it, however, has become stronger, its ranks have swollen, new members have joined it, and besides, it has reaffirmed itself as an independent and influential force in the world scene.

He stated that the struggle against colonialism has cost enormous sacrifices to the peoples and that the elimination of its sequels, the battles against neocolonialism and imperialism, for peace and national independence and for the establishment of a just and equitable international economic relations have been both hard and difficult.

He said that those who have received the solidarity of the movement of nonaligned countries in their struggle for self-determination and independence are grateful and committed to extend their energies, intelligence and goodwill to the solidarity with the peoples now waging a heroic struggle against colonial, neocolonial and imperialism domination, against racism and Zionism in Africa, Asia and Latin America.

Malmierca underscored that the solemn session coincides with the inauguration of an emergency session of the UN General Assembly to consider the problem of Namibia.

He stated that once again, the movement should prove its unity, its firmness regarding matters of principles and should redouble its solidarity with the South West Africa People's Organization [SWAPO] to prevent its legitimate right to freedom and independence from being swindled.

He affirmed that Namibia's illegal occupation by South Africa and the plundering of its natural and human resources would not be possible if the racists of Pretoria would not rely on the support and complicity of the most reactionary forces of imperialism, which have prevented the UN from granting independence to this territory.

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He referred to the increase of the military presence of U.S. imperialism in the Indian Ocean and its obtainment of new military bases in the Middle East, in the Red Sea and in the Persian Gulf, openly challenging the interests of the peoples of the area, whose aspiration is to live in peace and security.

In Latin America and the Caribbean, he said, imperialism is carrying through the reactionary policy of supporting antipopular regimes such as El Salvador and Guatemala, in a useless attempt to freeze and block the process of national liberation in Central America through military and financial assistance and by concealing the crimes of those governments against their own people.

"There they are attempting against the government of Grenada and Nicaragua and are threatening Cuba with the use of force and total blockade; they deny Puerto Rico its right to self-determination and independence; they are seeking, finally, to go back to the age of 'manifest destiny' and the policy of big stick", Malmierca underlined.

He went on to say that all this situation is ever more turning into a peril threatening only peace and security in the region and the world over.

The Cuban foreign minister referred to the gloomy perspectives of the international economic relations and to the increasing deviation of resources devoted to the arms race and to the ever increasing reduction of the resources aimed for development and recalled that President Fidel Castro affirmed before the United Nations 2 years ago that without development there will be no peace in the world.

He referred to the stepping up of the arms race and the U.S. decision to produce the neutron bomb, thus exacerbating international tensions and increasing the possibility of a nuclear holocaust.

He added that despite these difficulties and perils, the nonaligned movement will continue to work under the guideline of the high principles drawn up in its six summit conferences and that the toll of these two decades undoubtedly indicates that the future is fully deserved to the cause of peace, national independence and development.

"Those who attempt to split the movement, deviate it from its principles and to notch the anti-imperialist edge of its international task will not prevent the victory of the peoples which in Asia, Africa and Latin America are struggling for their independence and emancipation," Malmierca affirmed.

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COUNTRY SECTION

CUBA

TEXT OF GOVERNMENT STATEMENT ON ANGOLA SITUATION

PA281443 Havana PRELA in Spanish 1305 GMT 28 Aug 81

[Text] Havana, 28 Aug (PL)--The Cuban Revolutionary Government today released a document condemning the aggression that the racist South African regime is perpetrating against the People's Republic of Angola.

The following is the full text of this document, which the newspaper GRANMA, official organ of the Communist Party of Cuba Central Committee, published today:

Declaration of the Revolutionary Government of Cuba.

On Monday, 24 August, the Defense Ministry of the People's Republic of Angola released a communique announcing that a motorized column of the South African Army, consisting of 32 tanks and 82 military vehicles backed by the air force, had entered its territory and headed for the towns of Kampongo and Cahama, where they clashed with the People's Armed Forces for the Liberation of Angola [FAPLA]. Fierce fighting ensued. According to the communique, another enemy column entered about 150 km north of the border with Namibia and occupied Cataquero municipality, where fierce fighting also took place. The communique adds that the South African Air Force destroyed Chibemba commune, 300 km inside Angola.

On the very same day, Angolan President Jose Eduardo dos Santos denounced this aggression in a letter to UN Secretary General Kurt Waldheim. Yesterday he sent a message to Comrade Fidel Castro Ruz, president of the Nonaligned Movement, reporting the aggression and the threat posed by the concentration of 45,000 South African soldiers on the border between Angola and Namibia. The message reiterates Angola's right as a sovereign state, a member of the United Nations, to adopt the measures foreseen in Chapter 51 of the UN Charter and demands action by the Non-aligned Movement to put an end to these acts of aggression.

In his message, President dos Santos stresses that "the situation is becoming serious and might provoke a war of unforeseeable consequences." This South African aggression, which has already meant the destruction of several towns in Angolan territory and the loss of human lives for that fraternal country, constitutes a brutal escalation of these actions which the South African regime has been carrying out against Angola.

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The attempt to justify the attack as a punitive measure against the South West African People's Organization (SWAPO) is unacceptable by itself, but it also seeks to conceal the fact that it is a large-scale military action against a free and sovereign country which is entitled to live in peace and whose territorial integrity and independence must be strictly respected.

The aggression carried out by the shameful apartheid regime against the fraternal People's Republic of Angola constitutes an act of defiance and a continued challenge to the entire international community. It is also a mockery of the principles of international law and of the UN Charter. They may also constitute the beginning of an attempt by Pretoria to permanently occupy part of Angolan territory.

International press agencies report the rejection of the aggressive South African action by the immense majority of the world's governments, many of whom still maintain diplomatic and commercial relations with the outlawed apartheid regime.

The African countries, the Nonaligned Movement and the progressive and peaceloving forces in the world, which view with extreme concern the dangerous warmongering steps of the Pretoria regime and their possible consequences for southern Africa and international peace and security, raise their most vigorous voice of protest in the fact of such aggressive actions. Undeniably these incidents cannot be detached from the economic, political, diplomatic and military support that the South African racists are getting from the U.S. Government, which has unleashed a warmongering climate throughout the world, foments international terrorism and receives the representatives of the South African racist regime with honors and deferences, as demonstrated by the meeting President Reagan had with Roelof F. Botha in Washington on 15 May. Nobody can doubt that these facts must be viewed within the context of the U.S. plans to destabilize Angola and other frontline countries and to support the local counterrevolutionary bands. The U.S. Government is the intellectual author of and bears all the responsibility for this cowardly attack against Angola.

The brutality of these criminal South African actions is based on the daily methods used against the oppressed South African people, who are themselves suffering from the ruthless and inhumane policy of apartheid, and on South Africa's illegal, anachronistic domination of Namibia, whose people, led by SWAPO, their only and legitimate representative, are trying to put an end to this colonial occupation of their country. This cause is receiving the widest support of the international community. These actions are also occurring a few days before an emergency session of the UN General Assembly on Namibia.

The world is observing with admiration that the Angolan people and their FAPLA, led by the Popular Liberation Movement of Angola-Party of Labor and President Jose Eduardo dos Santos, are defending the borders of their fatherland against the South African aggression with extraordinary courage.

The racist invaders must cease their aggression and withdraw from Angolan territory. Their cowardly actions are already reaching limits which can no longer be afforded. If the South African invading columns get near the lines defended by the Cuban internationalist combatants, our troops, fulfilling our fatherland's duties of solidarity with our sister republic of Angola, will go into action with all their resources.

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The government and people of Cuba will not hesitate to again join the heroic people of Angola in the face of the racist and fascist aggression and in the defense of their independence and national integrity.

Havana, 27 August 1981.

"Year of the 20th anniversary of the Bay of Pigs invasion."

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